

“I CAN DREAM AGAIN” CHAPTER HIGHLIGHTS

CHAPTER 8 – BOY, YOU HAVE A MESSED UP FAMILY

War Zone at Home

My parents were consumed with helping the poor and needy. At the same time, they were just trying to make it with nine children of their own. Arguments and fighting were an everyday routine. Having three kids of my own now, I can only imagine the stress on my parents, especially as I consider the pressure of all nine of us running wild.

The breakdowns in an environment of rage, with both parents emotionally checked out, medicated beyond caring, created an atmosphere that drove most of us out as quickly as we could. Some left home early which led to 15 divorces, children born out of wedlock, abortions, and addictions of every kind in my family, over 60 members of my family and friends had been transformed by Jesus Christ through Teen Challenge.

Another thing that contributed to our terrible reputation was the bias against interracial marriage. I have six African-American, three Hispanic, one German, one Polish, and one Irish brothers-in-law. I have only five sisters. Marianne, who passed away, only married once. I have Jewish, Spanish, Polish, Italian, and German sisters-in-law, and all kinds of mixtures between. Add to that our two Moroccan and two Chinese cousins and an assortment of religions from Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist, Assemblies of God, Pentecostal, Catholic, Jewish, Muslim, and Buddhist. At present, several of my brothers and sisters are single, and I am sure the “Jack United Nations” will continue to grow.

Add to that chemistry, alcohol and drug addiction, eating disorders, rage, lust, promiscuity, and fear, and there was a combustible mixture that led to the dysfunction of our family. The consequences of our lifestyle not only affected my immediate family, but also 37 nieces and nephews, some of whom are racially mixed.